

## TORONTO ACADEMY LIBRARY.

To the Editor of the Record.

DEAR SIR,—

Will you allow me space enough in your columns to acknowledge certain benefactions which have recently been made to our Juvenile Library—mainly through the kind exertions of Mrs. Esson, during her late visit to Scotland.—That lady has just placed in my hands about a hundred well selected volumes, for the use of the young persons resident in the Academy, together with a small balance of money, which is also to be applied in the purchase of books, for the same purpose. I find from the memoranda which Mrs. E. has handed me, that our kind benefactors are Lady Foulis, the Misses Ruthersford, and Mr. and Miss Baillie, of Edinburgh; the Misses Spreull, and Mrs. Mitchell, of Glasgow; the Rev. J. Lewis, of Ormiston; Alexander Thomson, Esq., of Banchoory; the Rev. Mr. Davidson, Mr. and Mrs. Spark, Mrs. Reid, Mr. A. Leslie, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Inglis, and Mr. Thom, of Aberdeen; Miss Norman, of Dublin. And to them, together with Mrs. Esson, I would respectfully offer our sincere thanks. I must also state, that similar acknowledgments are due to Mrs. Wallis and Samuel Spreull, Esq., of Toronto, for several very appropriate works, which they have lately presented to our Library.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

ALEX. GALT.

TORONTO ACADEMY,  
November, 1850.

## The Record.

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1850.

## OUR HOME MISSION.

Glasgow, 25th Oct., 1850.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I understand that you have been appointed Convener of the Home Mission Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in the room of the late Mr. Robb.

I dare say you will have anticipated what I am now to announce to you, namely, my resignation of the appointment which I held, as Superintendent of the Scheme of which you are Convener.

I assure you that, when my Presbytery agreed to release me from my charge at New Cumnock, I had no other intention than to proceed to Canada, and to endeavour to fulfil the duties of my new office. But subsequent events have induced me to adopt a different procedure from what I intended. The principal of these events, was the lamented death of my dear and honored friend, Mr. Robb, of Hamilton. I may state that I have given information to the Colonial Committee of what I have done, and they are perfectly satisfied as to the propriety of my conduct.

Allow me farther to say, that though, in the meantime, circumstances have occurred to detain me at home, yet I feel, and I trust will continue to feel, a warm interest in the welfare of the Presbyterian Church of Canada. May God bless and prosper her, and make her an instrument of grace and salvation to multitudes of sinners.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours most truly,

GILBERT JOHNSTON.

REV. MR. GALT, Toronto.

As the whole Church is interested in the matter of the superintendency of the Home Missions, and has long been kept in suspense respecting it, we think it best to communicate in the *Record*, a letter recently received from the Rev. Mr.

Johnston, in which he intimates his resignation of the office of superintendent, to which he was appointed, with the concurrence of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church, some twelve months ago. This appointment, from which so much was expected by many of us, having thus failed, we shall no farther refer to it than to state that at the recent meeting of the Synod's H. M. Committee, we had no information whatever in regard to Mr. Johnston's intentions; having merely learned from the newspapers that the Presbytery of Glasgow had agreed to moderate in a call to him, at the request of their congregation at Govan.

The occasion, however, seems to us a suitable one for calling upon the Church seriously to consider this great department of the work committed to her. Its magnitude and importance, as well as its peculiarities, are, we suspect, not very fully or justly estimated, even amongst ourselves, and much less so, by our friends at a distance. The legislative and administrative powers of the Church being vested in the pastors and elders of particular congregations, at almost unavoidably happens that these congregations, if they do not wholly engross, engage at least the principal care and attention of our Church Courts. It is also to be observed, that ministers and elders, called in the providence of God to exercise their offices in this young community, are prone to follow too closely the prescriptive maxims and views and practices of official duty, prevailing in old and settled communities, not distinctly apprehending the totally new circumstances for which they have to consult and act here.

It is, we are persuaded, mainly through the influences thus indicated, that our Home Mission Scheme has all along held nothing more at the best than a secondary place in the counsels and operations of the Presbyteries and Synods of our Church, and that it has been considered very respectfully provided for, in having the mere crumbs from our table allotted to it. It is these influences that have rendered the regulation requiring of every probationer, previously to his pastoral settlement, a year's missionary service, little better than a nullity;—that have made so many of our ministers and congregations so backward and grudging in extending a week or two's service to the H. M. field by settled pastors; and that have led some to resist, and many to question, or regard as a matter of indifference, or as a devout imagination, the proposal of seeking out and setting apart, one, two, or more ministers of suitable gifts and experience and devotedness for this department of the work.

If such has been the case amongst ourselves, instead of wondering or complaining, that our friends in Scotland and Ireland have done so little for us,—or that Mr. Johnston should have so promptly preferred the pastorate of the little flock at Govan,—or that the Presbytery of Glasgow were so unhesitating in acceding to their demand for a moderation,—or that the Colonial Committee so readily and fully approved of these proceedings,—we should rather esteem it a ground of special gratitude, and a proof of their evangelistic spirit, that they have done so much.

We have learned, indeed, on good authority, that some of the leading people in the Free Church are disposed to laugh at our appointing a superintendent for our Home Missionary operations; regarding it as a measure unpresbyterial in its nature and tendencies, and altogether superfluous, seeing it properly belongs to the Presbytery to discharge the duties, intended to be devolved on the superintendent. But this manifestation of opinion need not greatly surprise nor offend us, and far less shake our confidence in the judgment of the Synod. It is easily accounted for. The title of superintendent, not perhaps very happily chosen, may have startled some of our friends, as involving some prelatical import; and very probably also, they have had the scheme represented to them as designing to invest that officer with some prelatical powers. This, of course, is altogether a mistake; and we would respectfully inform our friends at a distance, that the superintendent, according to the views of the Synod, was to be wholly under the direction of the Presbytery within whose bounds he should be labouring—receiving his instructions from them, and duly reporting all his proceedings to them. And it may not be superfluous farther to assure our friends, that for mere colonists, not a few amongst us still retain a tolerably well considered and decided attachment to presbyterianism, and a tolerably clear perception also, of the constitutional jurisdiction of presbyteries. It would be well, however, for the interests of the Gospel, that we ourselves, and those who are disposed to befriend our Church in this land, were more fully awake to the very great peculiarities that attach to the condition of the Presbyterian Church in this country—a condition in many respects totally different from that in which it is called to *enjoy* on its operations in Scotland or in Ulster—and therefore requiring, not certainly any deviation from Presbyterian principles,—but certain adjustments, modes of operation, and agencies, which may be quite unnecessary in old and settled communities. We cannot, for the present at least, state or illustrate these peculiarities, with any fulness or precision; but the following hints may throw some light upon them, and may lead those more immediately concerned to consider how we may adapt our system to them, and most effectually deal with the difficulties and obstacles which they involve: and

1st. It ought to be steadily kept in mind, that the population to which we are called to extend our operations, is diffused over a vast territory; while our ministers and missionaries are lamentably small in number. A Presbytery's bounds, with us, are usually equal in extent to a province, and in some cases as large as a whole kingdom. How can any one suppose that, in such circumstances, we can conduct evangelistic efforts precisely as they do in Lanarkshire or Londonderry;—to say nothing of the immense difference in the travelling facilities?

2nd. The great fact ought to be seriously considered, that of the members and adherents of the Church here, one half—or perhaps in some localities even more—are still destitute of a stated ministry. It will be a fatal mistake on our part, if this fact, taken in connexion with the rapid extension